

## HERRING NEWS.

### Herring Still Plentiful at the Bay of Islands.

#### Not Frost Enough Yet To Freeze Them Suitable for Market.

A report from Bay of Islands under date of December 12 states that herring are very plentiful, the most of the fish being in the Middle Arm, while there are none in the North Arm. The weather has been very stormy and there has not as yet been frost enough to freeze herring.

Sch. J. J. Flaherty is loading salt herring and has over 700 barrels.

No encouraging reports of herring have been received from Placentia Bay.

But little if anything has been heard from the herring fleet the past week, which is taken as an indication that there has been no frost.

The receipts of salt herring at this port thus far this season aggregates 57,000 barrels.

A dispatch received here lately states that the first frost of the season at Bay of Islands, N. F., came Wednesday night.

## Portland.

The fishing sch. Hockamock has stocked \$2000 in the past three weeks.

Schs. Hockamock and Mabel Bryson, and sloops Sarah A., and Ocean Belle were at Portland yesterday.

## HERRING NEWS.

### Bad Weather Recently at Bay of Islands.

The Bay of Islands, N. F., Western Star of last Wednesday has the following herring news:

"This fishery still continues good in Bay of Islands, and the salt bulk voyage is being prosecuted with unabated vigor. There is a large fleet of vessels in the Bay awaiting cargoes, but the weather of late has been so stormy that the fishermen have been hampered in their operations. Herring are to be found in large quantities in the Humber and Middle Arms, but in North Arm there is just a sign. A large number of vessels at North and Middle Arms are awaiting frozen cargoes, and if the present soft weather continues they will be some time before they get loaded. Some nets during the week have averaged twenty barrels per day, and if the present state of the fishery continues all the vessels now in the bay will have no trouble to secure full fares.

Since the first of the month the following vessels have arrived: Essex, Kentucky, Maxine Elliott, Ingomar, Dictator, Senator Gardner, Dauntless, Independence II., Monitor, J. J. Flaherty, Tatler, Ralph L. Hall, Faustina, Elizabeth N., Parthia, Cavalier and Lila D. Young. Four vessels have sailed with full cargoes, viz: Golden Rod, Judique, M. B. Stetson and Valkyrie. Most of the vessels are now fishing in the outside arms, and it is earnestly hoped that favorable weather may attend them, and that they may all get away before the arms freeze over.

## CAPT. CHARLES MACDONALD.

### One of Gloucester's Famous Mackerel Catchers in "Hooking" Period

#### Father of the Newly Elected Mayor, Geo. E. MacDonald.



The local correspondent of the Boston Globe in his Sunday letter has the following interesting items relative to the golden days of the mackerel fleet and the part which Capt. Charles MacDonald and others of the master mariners of this city took in this important industry:

The election of George E. MacDonald as mayor recalls to many men of middle age the exploits of his father, Capt. Charles MacDonald, known to the fishermen along the coast a generation or more ago as Charlie Mack, together with his contemporaries.

These men flourished in what may be considered the golden age of this city's prosperity, the period between 1860 and 1880, when the annual catch of the mackerel fleet, which was the cornerstone of the city's prosperity, averaged about 200,000 barrels.

These were in the old days of hooking when the mackerel fleet comprised some 600 vessels and brought a prosperity to this city which was evidenced by the merry music of the cooper's adze from every wharf in town along the circuit from Rocky Neck to Fort point. Not alone Gloucester, but all the New England fishing ports enjoyed the substantial reward which was the result of the North bay mackerel fishery.

Charlie Mack, as he was called, was the admiral, so to speak, of the fleet, which in the hooking days fished together in a bunch. He enjoyed a reputation in his day as a killer similar to that which Capt. Solomon Jacobs holds as king of the seining fleet.

He holds the record for the largest fare of mackerel from this port to the North bay and return—that of 356 barrels of mackerel taken on the line. He left this port July 3, 1867, in the schooner Annie Friend, and returned Aug. 20 with the above stated fare of mackerel caught on Bradville bank. It was a surprising feat, and many would not credit that his crew had actually caught the fish, but had bought them. Some of the other owners advised him to enter them at the custom house as a foreign production, as having been bought, and one asked what they had cost him.

"They cost me just 60 barrels of bait," was the reply, for in those days porgie bait was thrown to toll the fish. A peculiar thing in connection with this feat was that the owner of the vessel, just before his departure, called Capt. MacDonald one side and said: "Charles, August 20 I have a big note coming due. If it isn't met some way I shall be embarrassed." This big fare was landed on the day the note became due and the note was paid on time.

Of course, he had his pick of the crews. In those headline days all hove separate. Among the very cream of the fishermen of the fleet who went with Capt. MacDonald were Michael Keefe, the well-known outfitter, one of the few survivors of that era; Daniel Fletcher, Mitchell Proctor of Essex, and others. On the big trip referred to, Capt. MacDonald and Mr. Keefe hove together and stocked \$214 as their share.

Capt. MacDonald was hard pressed by other skippers of repute. These men came upon the scene just as the native born skippers like Capt. Sylvanus Smith, Capt. Joseph Rowe, Capt. Andrew Leighton and others had accumulated a competence and had withdrawn from the sea to found a firm and direct on land the operations of a fleet.

The men who took their place were largely recruited from the Straits of Canso and the Nova Scotia coast.

Among these masters who made name and money for themselves and their firms in those days were Capt John McMillan of the sch. Ella Osborne, who was lost in the Saratoga; Artemus Cameron, Joseph Carter, who was lost off Malpeque; Edward Cash, Albion K. Pearce, Peter Sinclair, George Smith, Daniel Hillier, whose vessel was the Julia Parsons; George Thurston, William Crouse, James Cushing, Hiram Spoford, and Michael Murray, a native of Ireland, who died recently; Sol Frellick, James Pattillo, John Healey, William Forbes, John, William H. and Samuel Collins, the former a relentless foe of the purse seine; James Doherty, William Harty, Eliphalet Wharf, Henry Hardy, Aaron Riggs, recently deceased; Andrew Hammond, Robert Allen, Sydney and Henry Smith.

Among the Rockport masters of the old hooking fleet of prominence were John Thompson, Benjamin Andrews, George Lowe of the Vandalia, Manly Grimes, who was lost in 1865 coming from Newfoundland, Lemuel Nightingale, Benjamin Tarr, George Miner, Paul and John Couley. Capt. Charles Lunt of Newburyport was one of the leaders of the fleet of that period, besides many from Cape Cod, including the Cahoons.

The greater part of the crews, like the masters, came from Nova Scotia, mainly from the Straits of Canso, including the Peoples, Welch, Somers, Langleys, all from the straits. They were stalwart men and great fishermen.

Many of these men made money, Capt. MacDonald being worth at one time \$50,000, and the greater part in course of time owned the vessels in which they sailed. Capt. MacDonald's vessels were the Bridget Ann, Charles Sayward, Shooting Star, Ellen Forester, Barbara Freitchie and Annie Friend, besides others. Every fisherman along the Atlantic coast knew him. It was the custom for the fleet to run into port at times to find from some of the shore fishermen the locality of mackerel.

On one occasion one of the fleet ran into the Acadian French settlement of Harbor Le Bear. "No Charlie Mack, no gannet, no mackerel," was the response of the habitant to the inquiry as to the whereabouts of the fish. Only a fisherman can appreciate the humor of the reply. Flocks of gannets hovering over the water are the infallible indication of the presence of the fish, yet the Frenchman placed the presence of Capt. MacDonald as indicating mackerel as of more value than the gannets.

## DAILY TIMES FISH BUREAU.

### To-day's Arrivals and Receipts.

Sch. Alice M. Guthrie, via Boston.  
Sch. Mattie D. Brundage, shore.  
Sch. Ellen F. Gleason, shore.

### Today's Fish Market.

Board of Trade prices for salt and fresh fish:

Salt fish, handline Georges cod, \$4.90 per cwt. for large, \$4.00 for medium; trawl Georges cod, \$4.25 for large, \$3.25 for medium; trawl Bank cod, \$4.00 for large, \$3.50 for medium; hake, \$1.25; pollock, \$1.25; haddock, \$1.75; large cusk, \$2.50.

Fresh fish, large cod, \$2.15; medium cod, \$1.75; all cod caught to the eastward of LaHave bank, \$2.15, medium \$1.75; cusk, \$1.50; Eastern haddock, \$1; Western haddock, \$1.15; hake, 90 cts.; Eastern hake, 90 cts.; Western hake, 95 cts.; pollock, 70c; snap per codfish, 60 cts.; snapper cusk, 40 cts.

Outside sales salt Georges cod, \$5.50 per cwt. for large and \$5.00 for mediums.

Outside sales fresh hake, \$1.00.

Bank halibut, 14 cts. per lb. for white and 10 cts. per lb. for gray.



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# Boston.

Sch. Emily Cooney, 4000 haddock, 500 cod.  
Sch. Ida M. Silva, 2000 haddock, 400 cod, 1000 hake.  
Sch. Bertha M. Bailey, 5000 haddock, 500 cod, 1000 hake.  
Sch. Flavilla, 10,000 haddock, 1000 cod, 600 hake.  
Sch. Minerva, 6000 haddock, 1000 cod.  
Sch. Robert and Arthur, 18,000 haddock, 8000 cod, 2000 hake.  
Sch. Mary Cooney, 7000 haddock, 3500 cod, 2000 hake.  
Sch. Mertis H. Perry, 7000 haddock, 1000 cod.  
Sch. Teresa and Alice, 8000 haddock, 400 cod, 2000 hake.  
Sch. Fish Hawk, 3000 haddock, 500 cod, 1000 hake.  
Sch. Kernwood, 4500 haddock, 1100 cod, 4000 hake, 1000 cusk, 1000 pollock.  
Sch. Ida S. Brooks, 5000 haddock.  
Sch. Maud F. Silva, 6000 haddock, 1500 cod, 1000 hake.  
Sch. Mildred V. Nunan, 6000 haddock, 2000 cod, 12,000 hake, 2000 cusk.  
Sch. Estelle M. Nunan, 6000 haddock, 1500 cod, 1500 hake, 2000 cusk, 1500 pollock.  
Sch. John M. Keen, 2000 haddock, 1000 cod, 1000 hake.  
Sch. Rosa Viator, 2500 haddock, 600 cod, 500 hake.  
Sch. Titania, 30,000 haddock, 6000 cod, 10,000 hake.  
Haddock, \$3.50 to \$4; large cod, \$4 to \$4.50; market cod, \$3.50 to \$4; hake, \$2.50; pollock, \$3; cusk, \$2.

Dec. 21

## FISHERMEN'S SUPERSTITIONS.

### Interesting Facts Relative to the Subject.

Written by the Late Captain Joseph W. Collins.

The publication of the truthful and interesting incidents relative to the life of the hardy fishermen of Cape Ann, by the late Capt. Joseph W. Collins from "The Fishermen's Own Book," has created much interest and we have been solicited to continue them. We do so with the greatest pleasure and today commences the publication of an intensely interesting article on "Fishermen's Superstitions," which is written in Capt. Collins' usual pleasing style as follows:

That there is more or less suspicious feeling in all fishermen, from the humblest fisher boy

to the rear admiral, is apparent to every one who has had an opportunity to observe the peculiarities of seafaring men. The fact that seamen, and especially fishermen, seem to be more dependent on "luck" than almost any other class of men, and that they are constantly meeting with events calculated to excite superstitious feelings in the credulous, is, without doubt, the cause of their believing in omens, signs, etc., to a certain extent.

But are fishermen more superstitious than other people among whom they mingle when on shore, or even, to go farther than that, some who move in the "highest circles?"

Most writers on the fisheries have discussed the credulity of the fishermen, and no doubt many people have come to think that in this respect they differ from the majority of mankind. Perley,\* writing of the fishermen of the Bay of Fundy, says: "He will undertake nothing of consequence on a Friday, and can prove by a hundred incidents how infallible are the signs and omens which he believes in. He thinks to die in his bed. True it is that he has been overset; that his boat loaded with fish to the 'gunnel,' has sunk under him, and that a vessel has run over him; but he is still alive and was not born to be drowned." \* \* "He believes in witches and dreams."

Granting that fishermen are credulous, it by no means follows that they are peculiar in this respect; or that they are the only ones who believe that "coming events cast their shadows before." The thrifty New England housewife looks with unspeakable dread on a broken looking-glass, predicting "seven years' hard luck;" expects a stranger when she drops her dish cloth on the floor; tells her daughter, if the latter upsets a chair accidentally, "You won't get married this year," and so on, *ad infinitum*.

An excellent authority, Sabine,† writing of the American fisherman, says: "It is said that he is credulous and superstitious. Admit that 'Kidd's money' has been dug for in every dark nook of the coast, or talked about in every cuddy, for a century and a half, and that horseshoes are nailed upon the masts of fishing vessels to keep off witches; what then? Is he the only one who has been, or still is, guilty of the same follies?" He adds in a foot note: "In 1825 the Duchess de Berri visited a watering place in France and indulged in sea-bathing. Sea water and fish which were afterwards taken from the spot were articles of immense value, and sold at

enormous prices. Indeed those persons who could not purchase a whole fish gladly possessed themselves of a few scales or a fin! The water, where the royal person had been washed, when bottled, and offered for sale, was known as 'Berri wine.'" Well may Sabine ask, "Have fishermen in any age been guilty of greater folly than these fashionable people of France?"

Among the New England fishermen the superstitious belief in the various signs and omens that will be spoken of farther on, is by no means universal. On the contrary, many of the most intelligent pay little attention to what they call "old woman's yarns." Among the superstitions of the New England fishermen may be mentioned the following.

First—A belief in lucky and unlucky sailing days. Almost from time immemorial Friday has been considered an ill-omened day upon which to begin a voyage. Nor has this belief been confined to fishermen alone, but has been shared in common by all seamen. At present, little regard is paid what are called unlucky sailing days by the Gloucester fishermen, and it is not an unusual sight, when a fine Friday comes after a period of bad weather, to see a large fleet spread their snowy canvas and sail away for the fishing grounds.

That the beginning of a voyage on Friday has been followed by both good and ill results in an equally great number of cases might easily be shown. I can relate two opposite instances out of my own experience, as doubtless, could many others.

In the spring of 1864 I started on a codfishing trip to Cashes, sailing on Friday. This trip, though not disastrous, was an eventful one, and did not prove so successful as circumstances had led us to expect. On one occasion during the trip, having to take the place in a dory of one of the crew who was sick, I went astray in the fog, and was out several hours—the only occurrence of that kind that ever happened to me. Another day the vessel caught fire in the fore-castle, during the cook's absence, and while the rest of us were busy dressing fish. The first knowledge we had of it was the bursting of flames out of the forward companionway. The fire had made such progress that we succeeded in subduing it only with greatest difficulty and at considerable personal risk. One night, the man on watch, in trying to change the "net-wing," to which was attached a gang of herring nets, lost his hold of the rope, and away went the whole lot, drifting off with the tide. Prompt action on our part saved the nets, though it was not looked upon as a particularly lucky incident to have to turn out at midnight and start off, half naked, to search for the drifting property. But, to crown all, a big school of dogfish struck on the fishing ground and drove all other kinds of fish away, rendering useless all further attempts to complete our trip. As might have been expected, the more credulous ascribed these unfortunate incidents to having sailed on Friday.

On another occasion I began my year's work upon Friday early in January, and it so happened that we left home on the same "unlucky" day every trip but one during the whole year. As we were successful in all instances, our crew came to think that Friday was a lucky sailing day.

\* M. H. Perley. "Report on the Fisheries of New Brunswick," 1851.  
† Lorenzo Sabine, "Report on Fisheries of American Seas," 1853, p. 383.

(To be continued.)

## DAILY TIMES FISH BUREAU.

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Sch. Maud F. Silva, via Boston.  
Sch. Reliance, shore.  
Sch. Ida S. Brooks, shore.  
Sch. Genesta, shore.  
Sch. Belbina P. Domingoes, shore.  
Sch. Galatea, shore.  
Sch. Evelyn L. Smith, shore.  
Sch. Walter P. Goulart, shore.  
Sch. Emily Cooney, shore.

### Today's Fish Market.

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Outside sales fresh hake, \$1.00.

Bank halibut, 14 cts. per lb. for white and 10 cts. per lb. for gray.

### Boston.

Sch. Regina, 13,000 haddock, 8000 cod, 10,000 hake.  
Sch. Hattie E. Heckman, 5000 haddock, 15,000 cod, 24,000 hake, 5000 cusk, 1000 pollock.  
Sch. Moaniam, 3000 haddock, 6000 cod, 15,000 hake.  
Sch. Seaconnett, 3500 haddock, 1000 cod, 2000 hake.  
Sch. Helen B. Thomas, 8000 haddock, 1000 cod.  
Sch. Orinoco, 1000 haddock, 7000 cod, 15,000 hake, 20,000 cusk.  
Sch. Agnes V. Gleason, 10,000 haddock, 700 cod.  
Sch. Mary Edith, 5000 haddock, 800 cod.  
Sch. Etta Mildred, 3000 haddock, 2000 cod.  
Sch. Oliver F. Kilham, 5000 haddock.  
Sch. Carrie F. Roberts, 2500 haddock.  
Sch. Flora Sears, 3000 haddock, 200 cod, 200 hake.  
Sch. Belbina P. Domingoes.  
Haddock, \$3.50 to \$3.80; large cod, \$4.50; market cod, \$3; hake, \$2; cusk, \$1.75.